

REMARKS

The above-application has been reviewed in light of the Office Action mailed on December 15, 2005. By this amendment, claims 1-24 have been canceled, and claims 25-46 have been added. The Applicants expressly reserve the right to present the canceled claims in one or more continuation applications. It is respectfully submitted that the claims pending in the application, namely claims 25-46, are fully supported by the specification, introduce no new subject matter, and are patentable over the prior art.

In the Office Action, claims 1 and 7 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Gellman et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,096,041). According to the Office Action, Gellman discloses all of the features recited by claims 1 and 7. By the present amendment, the Applicants have canceled claims 1 and 7 without prejudice. It is respectfully requested that the rejection of these claims be withdrawn.

In the Office Action, claims 3, 8-11, and 15-23 were objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim. According to the Office Action, claims 3, 8-11, and 15-23 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. Canceled claim 3 has been rewritten as new claim 25 and includes all of the limitations of canceled base claim 1 and intervening claim 2. It is respectfully submitted that new claim 25 is in condition for allowance. In addition, canceled claims 8-11 and 15-23 have been rewritten as new claims 30-33 and 37-45, respectively. New claims 30-33 and 37-45 depend directly or indirectly from new claim 25. Therefore, it is respectfully submitted that new claims 30-33 and 37-45 are in condition for allowance. By the present amendment, the Applicants have cancelled claims 3, 8-11 and 15-23 and it is respectfully requested that the objection to claims 3, 8-11 and 15-23 be withdrawn.

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In the Office Action, claims 2, 4-6, and 12-14 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Gellman et al. in view of Brenneman et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,053,935). By the present amendment, the Applicants have canceled claims 2, 4-6, and 12-14 without prejudice and it is respectfully requested that the rejection of these claims be withdrawn. New claims 26-28 and 34-36 correspond to canceled claims 4-6 and 12-14, respectively, and depend directly or indirectly from new claim 25. Therefore, it is respectfully submitted that new claims 26-28 and 34-36 are in condition for allowance.

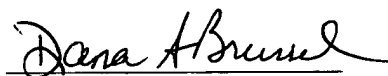
Claim 24 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite. By the present amendment, Applicants have canceled claim 24 without prejudice and it is respectfully requested that the rejection of claim 24 be withdrawn.

Claims 29 and 46 depend from new claim 25. It is respectfully submitted that new claims 29 and 46 are also in condition for allowance.

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In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, it is respectfully submitted that all claims now pending in this application, namely claims 25-46, are now in condition for allowance. Accordingly, early and favorable consideration of this application is respectfully requested. Should the Examiner believe that a telephone or personal interview may facilitate resolution of any remaining matters, the Examiner is respectfully requested to contact Applicants' undersigned attorney at the telephone number indicated below.

Respectfully submitted,



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